

AGN. NO. _____

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR DON KNABE

August 30, 2011

Suicide is a public health problem of immense proportions. Worldwide, there are more deaths due to suicide than to accidents, homicides, and war combined. Every single death leaves devastated friends and family in its aftermath. Suicide rates spike during times of economic recession and almost all of those affected suffer from treatable mental disorders, among them depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and substance abuse.

The Department of Mental Health and Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services have joined the Board of Supervisors in a focused effort to raise awareness of suicide prevention by co-hosting the Thirteenth Annual *Alive & Running 5-K Run/Walk for Suicide Prevention* to be held in Westchester on Sunday, September 25, 2011.

In Los Angeles County nearly 5,000 people attempt or die by suicide each year, 8.8% of Los Angeles high school students admitted that they had attempted suicide at

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least once according to the Youth Risk Behavior Survey of 2009. The US statistics show that suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death among 25-34 year olds and the 3rd leading cause of death among the 15-24 year olds. Eighteen percent of all suicide victims are between the ages of 45 and 54, 16% are between 75 and 84. These statistics can be reduced by educating our community on how to recognize and respond to the signs of suicide among our loved ones, friends, and colleagues.

Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services' Suicide Prevention Center (SPC) was first in the US to establish the 24-hour suicide prevention crisis line and has been the model for crisis lines around the country – and the world. They reach people who are at risk of suicide, concerned about a loved one or friend who is suicidal, who has lost someone to suicide, and they educate the community about suicide.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors proclaim Sunday, September 25, 2011 as “***Alive & Running 5K Run/Walk for Suicide Prevention***” throughout the County of Los Angeles and encourage employees and their families to participate in this event.